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ASSOCIATED PRESS 22 July 1983

GROUP LOSES APPEAL WASHINGTON

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A private organization trying to find out what the government spends on spy activities lost a federal court appeal today.

The U.S. Court of Appeals here turned down a plea by the Center for National Security Studies for the 1979 budget figure for the national foreign intelligence program, which includes spending by the Central Intelligence Agency, the State Department and the National Security Agency.

The appeals court said it lacked jurisdiction to decide the case now because the center's quest for various government intelligence documents is still pending before a lower court.

To give consideration to the center's appeal now would lead to time-consuming and burdensome piecemeal appeals, the three-judge panel said.

"Allowing such an appeal would open the floodgates to numerous appeals, hindering the effective administration of justice," the court added.